



# Focus on Fleet

*"There's no such thing as Government money. There is only Taxpayer money."*

**Summer-Fall 2004**

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## From the State Fleet Manager

It's been a great run.

The 14<sup>th</sup> of October of this year would have been a full ten years. I have never had a job that I enjoyed more, nor even near as much. I hope the next one is as good, but that will be tough. Of course the people here that I have had the honor of working with have been the reason this one was so great. I have had the privilege of working with the greatest group of people here at State Fleet, in General Services and the B&C Board, and in State Government as a whole, that can be found anywhere. I'm blessed.

For those of you who have not already heard, I have resigned my position here as State Fleet Manager to accept a position with the city government in Kansas City, Missouri. It was a difficult decision, and one that I agonized over for many days before deciding to make the move, but ultimately I had to do what is best for my family.

There have been many ups and a few downs here. I inherited a staff here that was the most professional and competent group in State Government. We have proven over and over, through numerous privatization studies, change initiatives, audits, and even the MAP Commission study, that State Fleet Management generates savings in the operation of state vehicles that are many orders of magnitude greater than the cost of this organization.

However, we continue to be challenged, and I am positive that the privatization study currently being conducted will prove this once again. We have been recognized through publications and awards at state, national, and even international levels, including the Larry Goill Award presented by

the National Association of Fleet Administrators (an international level award), for outstanding operations and innovations in fleet management. Many other state and local government fleet management operations have sought advice and guidance from South Carolina as they try to emulate some of our programs in order to reach the levels that we have attained.

Please don't misunderstand. I'm not saying these things to toot my own horn. I've said many times that my job here at SFM was mainly to sit up here in the front office and look pretty, and I will take credit for doing a great job of that, but the real work here at SFM is accomplished by the staff of great professionals that I leave behind. Some lucky manager is going to walk in here to fill this position, as I did, and find that they are blessed with the greatest bunch of folks to be found anywhere in state government. I will be sorry to leave them behind.

To all of the friends that I have made here in South Carolina, I say goodbye, and extend an invitation to look me up in KC if you're ever out that way. It won't take me long to find out the places where all the best barbeque and steaks can be found there, and I'm sure that I will be able to make the time to show you a few. In the meantime...

*...Y'all be safe out there!*

—Gerald W. Calk  
State Fleet Manager

## Alt-Fuel Update

### Ethanol available at Commercial Station in Columbia

Astute readers of *Focus on Fleet* have no doubt noticed that the Exxon Station at the corner of Bull and Gervais Streets in Columbia is now offering E-85 (ethanol blended with 15% gasoline) to the general public.

This is the first commercial station in the Columbia area to offer ethanol. The DHEC station is open only to government vehicles. As of this writing, the commercial ethanol is available at \$1.749 per gallon, while regular unleaded is \$1.899. Even better than the regular low price, this station is offering a promotion from 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM on 6 October: E-85 fuel for 85 cents a gallon!

To learn more about ethanol, visit <http://www.E85fuel.com>.

### Ethanol Infrastructure at USC

SCEO received \$23,030 in funding for the project with a cost share of \$9,870 from USC for a total project cost of \$32,900. The purpose of this project is to install E-85 refueling infrastructure at the University of South Carolina. USC has seventy flex-fuel vehicles (FFVs) and maintenance trucks that will fuel exclusively on E-85. Operating these vehicles on E-85 will displace 42,834 gallons of gasoline each year. The total cost of this project is only \$32,900, a low-cost project with high visibility and impact in the Columbia area.

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# Focus on Safety

## TIRE SAFETY

### Everything Rides On It

Protection against avoidable breakdowns and crashes. Improved vehicle handling. Better fuel economy. Increased tire life. Just a few of the reasons to take five minutes every month to check your tires.

### Safety Checklist

- Check tire pressure regularly (at least once a month), including the spare.
- Inspect tires for uneven wear patterns on the tread, cracks, foreign objects, or other signs of wear or trauma. Remove bits of glass and other foreign objects wedged in the tread.
- Make sure your tire valves have valve caps.
- Check tire pressure before going on a long trip.
- Do not overload your vehicle. Check the tire information placard or owner's manual for the maximum recommended load for the vehicle.
- If you are towing a trailer, remember that some of the weight of the loaded trailer is transferred to the towing vehicle.

### Safety Tips

- Slow down if you have to go over a pothole or other object in the road.
- Do not run over curbs, and try not to strike the curb when parking.
- Remember to check your tires once a month!

### There's Safety In Numbers

You can find the numbers for recommended tire pressure and vehicle load limit on the tire information placard and in the vehicle owner's manual.

Tire placards are permanent labels attached to the vehicle door edge, doorpost, glove-box door, or inside of the trunk lid. Once you've located this information, use it to check your tire pressure and to make sure your vehicle is not overloaded—especially when you head out for vacation.

### Checking Tire Pressure

Because tires may naturally lose air over time, it is important to check your tire pressure at least once a month. For convenience, purchase a tire pressure gauge to keep in your vehicle. Gauges can be purchased at tire dealerships, auto supply stores, and other retail outlets.

Remember, the tire inflation number that vehicle manufacturers provide reflects the proper pounds per square inch (psi) when a tire is cold. To get an accurate tire pressure reading, measure tire pressure when

the car has been unused for at least three hours.

- **Step 1:** Locate the correct tire pressure on the tire information placard or in the owner's manual.
- **Step 2:** Record the tire pressure of all tires.
- **Step 3:** If the tire pressure is too high in any of the tires, slowly release air by gently pressing on the tire valve with the edge of your tire gauge until you get to the correct pressure.
- **Step 4:** If the tire pressure is too low, note the difference between the measured tire pressure and the correct tire pressure. These "missing" pounds of pressure are what you will need to add.
- **Step 5:** At a service station, add the missing pounds of air pressure to each tire that is underinflated.
- **Step 6:** Check all the tires to make sure they have the same air pressure (except in cases in which the front and rear tires are supposed to have different amounts of pressure).



### Checking Tire Tread

Tires have built-in treadwear indicators that let you know when it is time to replace your tires. These indicators are raised sections spaced intermittently in the bottom of the tread grooves. When they appear even with the outside of the tread, it is time to replace your tires.

You can also test your tread with a Lincoln penny. Simply turn the penny so Lincoln's head is pointing down and insert it into the tread. If the tread doesn't cover Lincoln's head, it's time to replace your tires.

For a free brochure visit [www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov) or call 1-888-327-4236.

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## Defensive Driving Course Turns 40

The Defensive Driving Course (DDC) celebrates its fortieth anniversary in 2004. This program has helped many, many individuals redeem points against their drivers' licenses for traffic offenses. It can also plausibly share in the credit for the decrease in overall State vehicle accidents over the years since the course was first taught through State Fleet in the 1980s.

Recently the National Safety Council has been featuring highlights from the history of the course, first offered in 1963. Among the more interesting figures offered, it points out that some fifty million students have now taken the Defensive Driving Course. While many factors influence the number and severity of vehicle accidents, the DDC is certainly a force for good in giving people skills they can use to save their lives and the lives of their loved ones.

## All States now have .08 BAC law

With the recent passage of a new law in Delaware, all 50 states now have .08 blood alcohol concentration (BAC) laws. Delaware was the last State in the nation to accept the federally mandated lower standard. South Carolina's .08% law took effect in 2002.

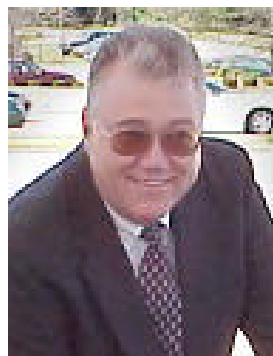
According to the September 2004 issue of *Traffic Safety*, published by the National Safety Council, NHTSA figures show that some 40 percent of the nation's highway traffic fatalities in 2003 were alcohol-related.

*Traffic Safety* writes that States can receive "incentive funding" for adopting the lower standard. This is a kinder, gentler way of saying that States that failed to pass the lower limit would lose up to seven percent of their federal highway funding. Those States could receive their "lost" highway funds back if they complied with the federal demands by 2007.

## Farewell to Gerry Calk

### State Fleet Manager since October 1994

State Fleet Manager Gerald W. "Gerry" Calk has accepted a position with the government of Kansas City. He is resigning his position as State Fleet Manager effective 30 September.



of his early achievements, in fact, was to shepherd State Fleet through a study by the Legislative Audit Council that purported to show that State government could save money by using a commercial service to manage its fleet.

Fortunately for the people of South Carolina, the LAC found that State Fleet, in fact, could provide this service more efficiently and for less money than a commercial business. We at State Fleet are optimistic that the current study — as would any impartial study — will come to the same conclusion.

On a more personal level, Gerry has striven to keep morale high through times of challenge (such as the various audits, including the MAP commission study). He is well-known for his sense of humor, and occasionally serenades the office with snatches of obscure country-western songs. During the holidays, he is always the purveyor of good cheer, even playing holiday music on his personal stereo for the benefit of all.

Gerry has also been an enthusiastic supporter of our social committee, dubbed the "Fun Committee" by those who benefit from its offerings. Operating only on employee donations, the

Gerry first came to work as State Fleet Manager in 1994. At that time, State government was in the midst of a long-term restructuring led by then-governor Carroll Campbell. One

"Fun Committee" holds lunchtime events several times a year. Frequently the menu for these events includes grilled items, and Gerry is a happy warrior of the grill. He brings his own grill from home (with a little help from an employee's pickup truck) and grills up the day's provisions.

"It should be *the law*," he says, "that whenever you fire up a grill, it has to have Polish sausage on it with barbecue sauce." Gerry frequently lived out this maxim in service to the Fun Committee.

As his usual grilling partner, particularly since the retirement of Bill Page, I can also say that I have never had a more jovial (or competent) grilling companion. Part of his persona — the part that, in my never-humble estimation, has made him successful — is the ability to communicate with people of every stripe, and never seem to put himself above them, despite his position of authority.

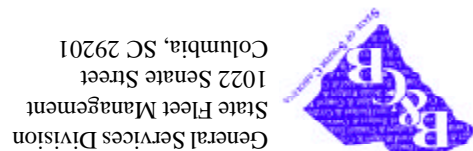
In the days since the announcement that he would be leaving, we have heard quite a few choruses of *Kansas City, Here I Come*. By the time he is finished there, perhaps the tune will be *Everything's Up to Date in Kansas City*!

As Gerry himself put it, "It's been a good run." Happy Trails to you, Gerry, and best wishes in your future career.

—Jonathan Eason, Editor

*The Larry Goill Award, given to SFM during Gerry's tenure.*





## Staff News

- Farewell and Happy Trails to State Fleet Manager **Gerald W. "Gerry" Calk**, who is leaving State Fleet at the end of September to take a position as Fleet Manager for Kansas City, Missouri. We will miss Gerry's sense of humor and the occasional country-western serenade most of all (see story on page 3 for more).
- Congratulations to **Johnette Griffin**, a member of SFM's Compliance and Analysis Team. In February 2004 she received her Associate Public Manager Certificate from the Budget and Control Board's Office of Human Resources.
- The Compliance and Analysis Team welcomes new team member **Teresa Duncan**, previously of the Program Support Team. Teresa has taken over responsibility for the day-to-day management of the Fuel Card program. You can reach Teresa at (803) 737-1611.

- The Compliance and Analysis Team has lost a valued Team Member: **Rob Malpass**, former Fuel Card Coordinator and current Management Analyst, has left State Fleet for a position with Retirement Systems. He will be missed.

## New Location for State Fleet

In Summer 2005, State Fleet Management will be moving to a new location on Shop Road in Columbia, not far from I-77 and Williams-Brice Stadium.

The move is part of a consolidation of resources on the part of the Board's General Services Division: quarters will be shared with Agency Mail, Surplus Property and Central Supply. The Shop Road property is currently undergoing renovations to accommodate the change.

State Fleet's current property is already under contract to be sold to a private concern; the sale will close after State Fleet has completed its move to Shop Road.

While moving is an unsettling experience for everyone involved, State Fleet remains committed to providing the best possible customer service to all our client agencies. We will still be available to all our clients even during the move.

### Coming in the next *Focus on Fleet*:

- Further impact from Legislative Study
- Update on State Fleet's New Location
- More Exciting and Interesting Stories!